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A survey of 11 of Minnesota's 16 state junior colleges begins with a discussion of the present situation and problems of junior college English and of the growth and function of the junior college. The major portion of the document presents the results of the survey based on a questionnaire which covered the following areas: (1) abilities and educational goals of the students, (2) titles and descriptions of courses offered in the English departments, (3) remedial courses, (4) levels of instruction, (5) class size, (6) content of freshman composition courses, (7) types of textbooks used, (8) supplementary materials used, (9) methods of instruction, (10) syllabi, and (11) follow-up evaluation of the student's communication skills. Recommendations and conclusions suggested by the study are discussed. Appendixes include a list of participating colleges and the questionnaire mailed to English department chairmen. (BN)

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A SURVEY OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM IN THE MINNESOTA STATE JUNIOR COLLEGES

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A SURVEY OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM IN THE MINNESOTA STATE JUNIOR COLLEGES

I. INTRODUCTION

Any normally conscientious teacher will sooner or later ask himself some fundamental questions about the nature of his work, his personal effectiveness, even his professional raison d'être. Such questioning may be even more common for teachers in the public junior colleges for reasons which are implicit in the very nature of that institution. Such are the considerations and personal doubts, combined with vast ignorance, which prompted this investigation.

The connotations of the ivied university which attach to the word college, even in the phrase junior college, are perhaps the reason for the shock to the novice when he finds among some of his students the same low levels of reading and writing ability, the same reluctance to work, the same lack of interest and motivation, the same immaturities that he noted among his former students in high school. (He is quite likely to have come to his junior college job from a secondary school teaching post. "A study by Eckert and Stecklein concluded that junior college teachers enter college teaching more by accident than by intention: they begin their educational service as high school teachers, take graduate work on a part-time basis, and later move to community college teaching posts." (II, 137)) He may begin to ask himself and others some quite basic and often unanswerable questions: Why have some of these students come here? What do they want to get out of

their junior college education? What does the state or community want to give them? Should the many functions and roles of the junior college rightly be the responsibility of the public? If so, are they feasibly combined in one institution? Is there enough support to pay for them all?

For the teacher of English, these general questions are followed by others unique to his special discipline and related to the general pattern of his society: How many kinds of English shall we teach? To students of what levels of ability, what interests, what goals? How do we deploy our people and facilities optimally and equitably among all our students? What should we do about our students who, after twelve years of school, cannot read at twelfth grade level, cannot write a paragraph or even a sentence? What kinds of material should our students be reading? Should they all be writing? What? What are good ways to teach writing? And so on.

Surely there is nothing new or shocking about any of these questions, which teachers have been asking of themselves and each other for years. This paper is another search for answers. It was undertaken after a year's experience in a public junior college and after meeting and talking with teachers of English and of other subjects and with administrators, many of whom in one way or another expressed similar uncertainties.

Before trying to determine in which direction the teaching of English should go, it seemed reasonable to chart the actual directions in which it is going. This paper, therefore, is intended

as a report about current practices in teaching English in the state junior colleges. (Private junior colleges in Minnesota and the General College of the University were omitted because their functions and student bodies are somewhat different from those in public institutions.)

The purpose of this paper is dual: To provide factual data a basis for the exchange of ideas, experiences, suggestions for improvement, and to evoke and stimulate such discussion. The hope is that this study will be a beginning of regular and continuing evaluations by those concerned with instruction in English in the state's junior colleges.

II. SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Before turning to our own state and its practices, it is well to look at the junior college as an institution in the nation, its growth and its functions, noting especially how these factors influence the English curriculum. Evidence will be cited, too, of an increasing interest in the problems of teaching English in the two-year college.

Growth of the junior colleges in the nation

In sheer numbers of institutions and of student populations, the junior colleges show a steeply inclined record of growth, from a total of 52 schools in 1920 to more than ten times that number, 573, in the fall of 1963, and from a total enrollment of 8,102 to 618,957 for the years 1920-1963. The growth of the publicly-controlled junior colleges has been from ten in 1920 to 357 in 1963 (an increase of 350%) and from an enrollment of 2,940 to 546,111 students in that 43-year period. (It is interesting, in comparing these two sets of figures, to note in the changing proportions the increasing ratio of public to private institutions, which may reflect the decreasing numbers of church-related institutions.) Much of this growth has occurred within the last ten or twelve years, from a total number of institutions in 1955 of 309 to 845 in 1965. (All of these figures are from Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1967, p. 132.) In more succinct form, "Since 1961 nearly 200 two-year colleges have been established, and enrollment in two-year colleges has almost doubled." (VII, 1)

Because "More than twenty new community colleges are being

established each year," (I, 11), the projections are equally impressive: "It has been estimated that by 1970 there will be 1,000 two-year colleges enrolling nearly 2 million students." (VII, 1) Part of these increases is due to rising percentages of the relevant age group (18-21) enrolled in institutions of higher education, 22.1% in 1946 and 38.9% in 1962 (and probably double the 1946 figures by this time). (II, 52) Another factor in the increase may be that for various reasons (cost and convenience, among others) the junior colleges will enroll freshmen who might otherwise attend four-year colleges. These two factors and the normal population increase account for the projection that ". . . junior college enrollment will eventually include perhaps 80 percent of each year's high school graduates . . ." (I, 12)

Growth of the Junior Colleges in Minnesota

Minnesota shows the same pattern of growth in its public junior colleges, which all became a state system in 1964. Within the past decade, the number of such schools increased by 100% to the present total of sixteen. (And six have been opened since 1965!)

Student populations show an even more dramatic trend since four of the newer state institutions have been opened in population centers and, with one exception, have the largest numbers of students in attendance of the colleges in the state system. The total number of students in the public junior colleges has risen from 1,450 in 1954 to 9,367 in 1966, a 546% increase. As suggested in the last paragraph, most dramatic has been the increase in numbers of students in the past few years, from 5,415 in 1964 to the almost double 1967

fall quarter enrollment of 10,186. Compare the large increase between 1954 and 1966 of 481.8% for all the junior colleges in the state with the figure of 136.6% increase for the four-year colleges, and it will become apparent that in Minnesota, as in the nation, the pressures of entering students will be felt chiefly in the junior colleges. (Enrollment figures are from charts prepared by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission of the State of Minnesota.)

Roles and functions of the junior college

Such exaggerated growth, disproportionately rapid compared with the growth of other educational organizations, clearly reflects new demands and new needs in this country. What are these needs? A few quotations from writers in the field will show that the junior colleges are agreed, at least in principle, on several main roles which they must play. According to one official, Thomas B. Merson of the American Association of Junior Colleges, in an address at the 1965 Tempe Conference (I, 10), the junior college has six major responsibilities: 1. Education for the student who plans to transfer to a four-year institution, the transfer program "with university-parallel lower-division courses"; 2. Occupational-technical programs "which prepare community college students for gainful employment"; 3. Continuing education programs, "extended day or evening programs"; 4. Repair (remedial) programs to "provide opportunity for students to overcome deficiencies"; 5. General education "constituting an appreciable portion of the programs of all students and having as its goals development of knowledge,

skills, and attitudes designed to provide students with a scale of values upon which choices would lead to richer and more meaningful lives, and greater service to society"; 6. Counseling and guidance services.

Typically these goals are stated in catalogues in somewhat the following fashion (from the Catalog, 1963-64, College of the Desert, Palm Desert, California): Objectives: 1. Academic preparation for advanced study; 2. Occupational training, "vocational competence for its trainees"; 3. General education, "to inculcate attitudes and develop knowledge and skills essential to effective living as persons, members of families, citizens, and workers."

This is a tall order, and one finds, in the literature, legitimate questions about whether the institution can and should fulfill all of these roles. In one recent book, the writers pose these basic questions: "Should the two-year college retain the 'open door' policy, or should it impose selective admission policies, thus eliminating individuals of limited academic ability or inadequate background? Can the college simultaneously provide college-transfer programs of high quality and vocational, technical, and community-service programs? How can the college adapt its programs to the wide differences in abilities, motivations, and ages of its students? What are the distinctive roles of the two-year college which are not merely reflections of either the secondary schools or of four-year colleges?" (II, 19) Another writer asks, ". . . is public education through the fourteenth grade the birthright of every American child? Is the public junior college an extended secondary school, or is it part of higher education?" (V, 27)

While granting the necessity of embracing all of these functions, writers see various difficulties in implementing such diverse aims. One writer mentions faculty attitudes as a frequent problem: "Before a junior college adopts this [open door] policy, however, there must be a genuine sympathy for it on the part of all the professional personnel in the college, and there must also be acceptance by the policy-makers of the unmistakable implications of such a policy for a very broad educational program . . . The attitude of the teaching staff must also be sympathetic with such a policy. The student body cannot very well be divided into first-, second-, and third-class citizens. Discrimination against some types of students in certain courses cannot be permitted. The 'open door' policy is not intended as an arrangement by which a college for the academically apt takes on an adjunct of miscellaneous individuals who are tolerated for the sake of charity. In maintaining the proper campus spirit, the instructional staff has a tremendous responsibility." (VI, 24-25) Another writer sees a concomitant problem in evaluation standards. "There cannot be only one standard of achievement, or only one expectancy level, any more than there can be only one program, if equality of educational opportunity is to be a reality in an institution which enrolls a heterogeneous student group." (I, 13) Still others see difficulties in placement standards: "In order to maintain acceptable standards while fulfilling its societal role, the two-year college must make a clear-cut distinction among the four separate programs. What is needed is a restrictive admission policy for the more demanding programs and a more logical plan for the over-all

organization of administration." (II, 209) Further, these authors show the difficulty (perhaps unwillingness) to devote equal resources to all phases of the curriculum: "In one college in a tight budget year, for example, an additional instructor for English composition was hired rather than adding a second instructor in remedial reading. The reading diagnostician, who had developed a fine remedial program, resigned because of the lack of staff to meet the needs of a large segment of the students in the college." (II, 209)

Still stronger doubts of the ability and desire of the junior colleges to fulfill these many roles was expressed by Roger H. Garrison in a recent address to a conference of junior college faculty members at the University of Minnesota, when he cited a college newspaper that rated its school's new catalogue as "high on the list of fictional reading available to students." Mr. Garrison implies that the college does not fulfill its several stated functions when he says, "The statements of aims and purposes, for the most part, read like the academic jargon equivalent of the Boy Scout laws, laced with an amorphous piety of intent that sounds unquestionably noble." (IV, 18)

The public junior colleges in Minnesota profess three or four main goals: preparation for transfer to a four-year college; education terminating in an Associate of Arts degree after two years (the terminal program); vocational (occupational, technical) training; and general education for all students and, indeed, almost anyone in the community. These aims are typically stated in each of the catalogues, as, for example, in the catalogue of Rochester

State Junior College (page 9): "The primary functions of the Rochester Junior College are as follows: 1. To offer the equivalent of the first two full years of work at the University of Minnesota and thereby at most colleges and universities, thus enabling students to enter a four-year college with third-year standing. 2. To provide one or two years of vocational training for qualified students in areas in which such training is valuable to students and to the community. 3. To provide an adequate amount of general education for our vocational students, and to provide for our transfer students that portion of their general education which is feasible during the first two years of their college training. 4. To provide college credit course work and non-credit courses on an extended-schedule basis for the adults in the community." In addition, one college, Willmar, states, as one of its functions, provision for "preparatory courses designed to overcome deficiencies in preparation before enrolling in certain college level courses," the repair or remedial role mentioned by Mr. Merson.

Impact and pressures on the English curriculum

These many and varied purposes and the huge enrollments that continue to increase precipitously have special impact on the English curriculum in the junior colleges. There are the obvious pressures of increasing numbers of students, who must sometimes be taught by poorly prepared instructors in overly large sections, and of the necessity of composing and initiating many different kinds of curriculums tailored to the many aims and kinds of students.

In addition, subtler pressures are at work. In an address to the Tempe Conference, Albert R. Kitzhaber mentions some of these. There is, first, the pressure exerted by the four-year colleges and universities who "often hold up their own freshman and sophomore courses as models for the two-year colleges to imitate . . . The obvious danger in this tendency is that courses intended to serve students who are seeking a baccalaureate degree are not necessarily well adapted to the needs of the many students in two-year colleges who have other educational goals." (I, 2) (He adds, incidentally, that such courses in the four-year colleges "can scarcely be said now to deserve uncritical imitation.") Another pressure will come from programs, often federally subsidized, for vocational education which support the "obviously utilitarian part of the curriculum and therefore the prestige and influence of the vocational point of view and its numerous advocates. Already there are rumblings against literature and similar 'impractical' or 'frill' subjects, and arguments for substituting something called, grimly enough, 'Vocational English' in place of more generalized and liberal courses." (I, 2) Finally, Mr. Kitzhaber sees pressures from the secondary schools because "Fundamental changes in school English courses appear certain during the next few years," and, as with math,". . . the two-year colleges, and the others as well, will sooner or later find themselves obliged to revise their English programs . . . because of these pressures from below . . ." (I, 2)

Response to pressure: survey and conferences

Prodded and pushed by the community, by the different needs of students, by the various goals of the two-year colleges, by the four-year schools, by the huge student populations -- by all of the pressures, spoken and silent -- it is no wonder that teachers of English in the junior college have been reacting by thinking and talking and writing. These activities have taken the forms of: 1. an extensive national survey of the English curriculum in the junior colleges sponsored jointly by the National Council of Teachers of English and the Conference on College Composition and Communication; 2. annual regional conferences on the same subject, held each spring and similarly sponsored by the N.C.T.E.; 3. writings on the subject in the Junior College Journal by teachers from all parts of the country; and 4. institutes such as one recently sponsored by the University of Minnesota on English and Humanities in the state junior colleges.

Of these various efforts at communication and self-evaluation one should mention some more specific details from the national survey titled English in the Two-Year Colleges, completed in 1965. Based on the responses of 479 teachers in 239 two-year colleges, the survey covers such matters as English requirements for graduation, placement in composition courses, content of the regular English composition course, remedial English courses, honors courses, teachers' qualifications, unique problems of teaching in the junior college, and other areas, including some needed studies and recommendations of a general nature. Some details of the findings will be given later on in this paper in connection with data in similar areas, but, at this

point, a listing of the implications of the survey should be mentioned; they are paraphrased from a talk at the Tempe Conference by Samuel Weingarten, one of the directors of the survey.

After making an important point about the heavy teaching loads and class sizes in the junior colleges, Mr. Weingarten calls attention to the need for clear-cut criteria for sectioning a "heterogeneous mass of students with varied degrees of preparation, with varied abilities and goals." He cites also from the survey "the great variations in cutoff scores for placement in the regular English course, the wide range of writing requirements and text-books." Teachers seek guidance, he says, and there is therefore "a great need for local workshops, national study groups, two-year college affiliates of N.C.T.E. . . ." He finds of great concern the handling of remedial courses, which "we cannot wish out of existence . . .," and he stresses the "need for the development of more suitable teaching materials for such instruction than exist now." Finally, and most startling, "The report shows us that beset as these teachers are by innumerable instructional problems, many of them nevertheless retain an aloofness and a disdain for professional studies . . . which could save them from being poorly prepared and disadvantaged, large numbers of whom are to be found in our two-year colleges." (I, 29-30)

A few months later, at a C.C.C.C. meeting in St. Louis, in a kind of "Confiteor," Robert W. Danielson pithily summed up the findings of the Survey: "We confess, first, to accepting teaching loads that make effective instruction difficult if not impossible.

Second, we confess to accepting from the four-year institutions 'unworthy originals' for our transfer courses. Third, we confess to accepting from educational psychology theories of learning that do not work with remedial students. Fourth, we confess to accepting measurement devices that do not help us place our students in appropriate beginning courses. Fifth, we confess to accepting teachers poorly trained in the disciplins of English. Sixth, we confess to accepting teachers with little knowledge of the purposes and functions of our institutions. Seventh, and most damaging of all, we have in the past accepted a seemingly endless perpetuation of this intolerable state of affairs." (I, 110)

Many of the same central issues predominated at the regional conferences on English in the Two-Year Colleges in 1966. In the Junior College Journal, William J. Scannell reports these as the problems of: 1. identifying and placing terminal students; 2. deciding on what types of specialized courses should be worked out for vocational-technical programs; 3. improving remedial courses; 4. reducing student and class loads; and 5. resolving the conflict between the liberal-arts, general education and the practical, specialized curriculums. The conferees noted the following areas of needed research: the academic success of transfer students at four-year colleges, the development of adequate diagnostic and placement tests, grading standards, remedial programs, evaluation of materials, and graduate courses for junior college teachers of English. (VIII, 24-29)

Thus again and again the same concerns are expressed. Many of these will also be apparent in the collected results of this paper and in the comments of some of the English instructors in this state.

III. METHOD OF THE STUDY

A questionnaire was drawn up (see Appendix B) which covered these areas: student data, i.e. relative percentages of transfer and terminal students and academic abilities as measured by high school rank and A.C.T. composite scores; credits in English required for various degrees and programs; titles and descriptions of courses offered in the English departments; remedial courses; levels of instruction (number of levels, percentage of students in each, sectioning criteria); class sizes; content of freshman composition courses; types of textbooks used for various kinds of courses; non-book supplementary materials used; methods of instruction; syllabi; and follow-up. In addition, respondents were asked to comment on these or other aspects of teaching English in the junior college.

These questionnaires were sent to the chairmen of English departments in all sixteen of the state junior colleges in Minnesota. Letters that explained the purposes of the study accompanied the questionnaires.

Of the sixteen possible responses, eleven were received in time to be included in this study, or about 70 percent of the total number possible. The questionnaires were, for the most part, quite fully and seriously answered. Many respondents sent syllabi or course outlines, lists of textbooks, printed or mimeographed guides for freshmen, even sample themes, and almost all took the time to write personal comments. Some of these will be quoted (anonymously) where they are pertinent.

The answers to the various parts of the questionnaire were then collated, and these results will be presented in the following section.

IV. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Institutions responding

Of the sixteen junior colleges in the state system, eleven responded to the questionnaire, including three in the area of greatest population density, the Twin Cities. (A list of respondents is given in Appendix A.) The area covered represents all parts of the state except for the westernmost part. The oldest to the youngest institutions are represented, from one founded in 1915 to two which opened in the fall of 1967. (The question of age as a component in the "flavor" of a junior college is mentioned in "Who Goes Where to Junior College," an A.C.T. Research Report by James M. Richards, Jr. and Larry A. Braskamp. In correlating data about students entering various institutions with some characteristics of such institutions, the authors speak of "Conventionalism" instead of "Age" of an institution. They do not explain the terms, but the very choice connotes a certain attitude on the part of the institution.)

In size, too, the reporting institutions range from one with the smallest study body (233) to one with the largest (1,401). (Enrollment figures from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission of the State of Minnesota.)

But these total enrollment figures do not give a complete picture of the strains and pressures that an institution is subject to when rapid growth occurs in a relatively short time. Here percentage of annual increase is relevant. Excluding the two newest junior colleges (and brand-new colleges have their own stresses), there are percentages of increase in numbers of students for the

period 1954 to 1966 ranging from 96 to 708 percent. All but one school showed percentages of increase over 200 percent. The student population in the state as a whole increased by 546 percent. (Percentages of increase were computed and furnished by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission of the State of Minnesota.)

Students' educational goals and academic abilities

What are they like, these many students who comprise this swelling junior college population? In this section we will see their professed plans and their abilities, so far as these are ascertainable and in relation to national trends.

The questionnaire sought to determine the numbers of students who declare themselves to be either transfer or terminal. Of the nine respondents who furnished this information, most said that the numbers of their students who intended to terminate their formal education with the junior college were in a distinct minority, ranging from .02 percent to 37.5 percent. Only one college (in the metropolitan area) gave 69 percent as its figure for terminal students, and the other two colleges in the same area had higher percentages of declared terminal students (37.5 and 33 percent) than the other schools. Relatively higher proportions were noted in colleges situated in other populous areas.

These figures would indicate that transfer students are in the majority, but this may not really be the case. Although statistics are not available that would show exactly what percentage of junior college students in the state actually continue in a four-year institution, some pertinent quotations about the national trend may

perhaps apply to the situation in Minnesota.

One cannot assume, on the basis of stated plans, that all who declare themselves to be transfer students actually do transfer, for, as one writer states,". . . a far greater number of students classify themselves as transfer students than do eventually transfer to a four-year college . . . By this process a substantial number who would normally be classified as transfer students are actually terminal students in that they terminate their formal schooling at some time during the junior college years." (VI, 48) Or, as a rought estimate, "We can expect less than half of the junior college graduates to transfer to senior colleges . . ." (I, 12) Roger H. Garrison, in his talk at the University of Minnesota, estimated an even greater proportion of non-transfer to transfer students: "Remember, two-thirds of our students do not transfer, and that's a long-term, steady statistic that is not changing." (IV, 18) One writer explains the phenomenon thus: "Typically, students resist terminal programs and accept them only after an initial academic failure. As a matter of fact, only 4.7 percent of the two-year colleges in the country declare themselves as being chiefly oriented toward terminal education, while 72.7 percent declare themselves as being chiefly oriented towards college transfer. Students enter college, regardless of previous academic failures, wanting liberal arts, pre-medicine, or pre-law curricula. They can usually be counseled into a two-year terminal program only after they have failed in their original intention." (I, 99)

Related perhaps to the fact that fewer students transfer than originally plan to is the level of their academic ability. Unfortunately,

this kind of information was furnished by only six of the respondents, and, of those, one used a different kind of measurement (CAR, the combination of high school rank and NSAT scores) from those used by the others. Any kind of conclusion about academic abilities cannot therefore be given. One may merely note some medians in high school rank and percentiles of A.C.T. scores. The range in medians of high school rank was between 61 to 32, and in A.C.T. percentiles from 63 to 39. Interestingly, the higher medians were to be found in smaller colleges in the less populous areas. But it must be reiterated that these few statistics are insufficient for making any general statement.

It is appropriate, however, to cite some medians of the American College Testing Program. Based on their 1963 and 1964 tests, the medians of the composite scores are 18.5 (in a scale of 1 to 36) for freshmen in two-year institutions, 19.7 for freshmen in four-year institutions, and 21.8 for freshmen in institutions which offer master's and doctor's degrees. (X, 11-16) Pertinent too are statements by writers on the junior college. Medsker writes: "The available facts indicate that the average academic aptitude level of students entering two-year colleges is somewhat below that of those who enter four-year colleges . . . Also it is obvious that the students enrolled in transfer programs score higher than students enrolled in terminal programs . . . On the other hand, roughly 30 percent of the students entering junior colleges were above the mean of the students entering four-year colleges." (V, 30, 36, 38)

In similar vein, Reynolds says, "Junior college students with the greatest ability compare favorably with the most able

students in four-year colleges . . . The less able in the junior college drop substantially below the less able in the four-year colleges. It is quite natural to expect that the computation of a mean or a median for the junior college student will be lower than that for students in four-year colleges . . . The contrast in ranges of ability between students in junior college and those in four-year colleges, and the consequent contrast in the mean or median ability, is likely to become even more pronounced." (VI, 47) Mr. Reynolds explains this latter statement by citing increasingly rigorous admission standards of four-year institutions which would have the effect of encouraging those not admitted for reasons of poorer academic ability to seek admittance to the open-door junior colleges.

Finally, in their study of students entering various kinds of junior colleges, Richards and Braskamp evaluate not only academic achievement, but other student qualities (such as goals, extra-curricular activities, etc.) and conclude: "In short, two-year colleges tend to have less talented students than four-year colleges have, regardless of how talent is defined." They summarize typical patterns of students entering junior colleges thus: " . . . two-year colleges attract pragmatic students seeking vocational training; they are less attractive to talented students who are academically and intellectually oriented . . ." (VII, 12-13)

<u>English requirements for graduation</u>

Almost all of the respondents reported as a general requirement twelve credits in English for both the Associate in Arts and

Associate in Science degrees. (The two newest institutions had only tentative requirements.) Twelve credits generally means one year's work in English, but small exceptions may be noted: One college requires nine credits for the Associate in Applied Science degree, and another requires nine credits for a diploma. The general requirement of one year's English is consistent with the national picture, for the survey reports that a year of freshman English for the Associate in Arts degree is the typical requirement. But not all schools require English, and, "It is probably the strongest students who get the most English, and the weakest who get the least." (XI, 18)

One junior college in Minnesota reports that English is not required for the "terminal business secretarial certificate." Another states that all students may be excused from required English since "A student cannot be forced to take any course." Three of the schools excuse students of high ability from some or all of the freshman English courses, one on the basis of "high scholastic scholarship exhibited in the classroom," another on the basis of an advanced placement score of 3, and the third on the basis of "A.C.T. scores plus entering English Blue Book score." In the first two cases, the student is excused from only one quarter, but is encouraged to enter classes for those of higher ability for the next two quarters.

Pattern of English courses offered

Since one of the unique characteristics of the junior college is its many different functions, one should naturally expect that the required English will show many different types of courses, and we shall see from the variety of course titles that this is the case. (Course offerings listed here are taken from the available, current catalogues.)

All of the institutions, of course, offer a transfer course in composition for freshmen. (Two of the colleges even have freshman honors courses.) In all cases, this sequence of three quarters work with four credits each satisfies the requirements for graduation. As in the four-year colleges, the content places a heavy emphasis on expository writing and the reading of essays, articles, criticism, etc., with one quarter devoted mostly to the techniques of research and a research paper as the main project. Another quarter generally introduces the student to various literary genres; here the student writing is apt to be of the critical, literary study variety. More will be said about the content of the freshman composition course in a later section.

In addition to the standard transfer freshman composition course, eight of the junior colleges offer a non-transfer course which, alone or in combination with one other, will fulfill the requirements for graduation. Earning three or four credits for each quarter, the student in this course is likely to encounter a review of the "basics" (presumably grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling). He will also do largely expository writing and will,

as in the transfer course, read in various literary genres. In addition, "communication" and "mass media" are often listed as part of this course.

Some of the junior colleges recognize that " . . . English communication cuts across all lines in vocational requirements . . . English, therefore, is a prerequisite for all educational programs, but the content should be adapted to the students and their educational goals." (II, 232) There are, therefore, some course offerings of a vocational nature for the non-transfer student, including Business English and English Composition for Nursing Students. In addition, one institution offers three quarters of Technical English. For the non-transfer student too, some colleges offer review or remedial courses in composition, but these will be discussed in this section later on.

Aside from these two main freshman courses, a variety of others may be available to freshmen in a few of the colleges: advanced exposition, creative writing, efficient reading, journalism, mythology, etc.

For the sophomore year, all offer English literature in a survey course, organized usually on a chronological basis, in a three quarter sequence of five, four, or three credits. Nine of the colleges also offer an analogous course in American literature in three quarters of three credits each. In addition, some schools teach advanced composition or writing for one, two, or three quarters for sophomores, and a few others offer courses in modern literature, creative writing, or journalism.

Parenthetically, it is interesting to note some other course titles in various junior colleges in the country, as reported in the 1965 survey: advanced grammar; philosophy, logic, ethics; advertising copy; English for foreign students; radio and TV writing; vocabulary; children's literature; the Bible; and others. (XI, 3-4)

The repair role of the junior colleges is manifested in the English curriculum in fewer than half of the responding departments. Only two of the respondents offer remedial reading work, and seven offer no remedial writing. When such courses are offered, they are required of the student on the basis of his high school grades, A.C.T. scores, sample themes, the Purdue English Placement test, or a combination of these criteria. Of the six who responded to the question, four felt that such programs are generally effective (i.e., for 75 percent or more of the students), while two felt that 25 percent or fewer benefited. It should be noted that two of the colleges which do not now offer remedial writing courses indicate in the comments that such work will probably be added to the course offerings.

This follows the national pattern reported in the survey. "Fifty-eight percent of the 187 chairmen of departments of English . . . describe remedial English courses. Another 10 percent indicate that they plan to innovate such courses within the next year." (XI, 51) Similarly, most report satisfaction with their remedial programs. Other relevant matters mentioned in the survey involve the problem of grading standards in these courses, the value of grammar and the kinds of grammar, the use of programmed material, methods of instruction, and teacher preparation for these courses. In summary,

the authors of the survey conclude, " . . . that the remedial function is an integral and indispensable part of the English curriculum of the two-year college which has an open-door policy . . . It must be regarded as a sine qua non of the basic English program . . . ," and they urge further study of the comparative effectiveness of such programs. (XI, 51-56, 81)

Levels of instruction

In addition to the repair function of the junior college, which is implemented in English through remedial courses, there is the further goal of training students for several different educational and vocational goals. The questionnaire asked, therefore, for information about the number of different levels of instruction. About half of the respondents (six of ten who answered this part) said that their students were grouped homogeneously into different levels, including honors, transfer, terminal, and preparatory (presumably remedial). Generally the grouping was into two levels, transfer and non-transfer or transfer and remedial. In all but one school the ratio of students in transfer courses to those in terminal or other non-transfer courses was approximately two to one, i.e. about 65 to 70 percent in transfer courses and 35 to 30 in non-transfer courses.

One exception to this proportion was the large, city junior college, where 32 percent of the students are in the transfer course and 68 percent in the non-transfer course. This point is made in

connection with some findings in the national survey which highlight the special needs of the open-door college, especially its community-linked problems, for the survey shows that educationally disadvantaged students, both city and rural, are likely to be found in the colleges' remedial English courses. "The educational problems of the community are harvested by the local community college." (XI, 21)

Finally, it is noteworthy that of the six colleges reporting tracking, five are in the large population centers.

The criteria used most commonly in sectioning students are high school rank and A. C. T. scores. A few respondents mentioned other standards, such as I.Q., sample themes, vocational goals, teacher or counselor recommendation. All but one use a combination of various criteria. None of the respondents indicated specific cutoff scores for sectioning into various levels, and this study cannot therefore infer what the relative standards in the different colleges may be. But here it is relevant to cite some of the national findings about the wide range of cutoff scores: " . . . the cutoff score for placement in regular English can vary as much as forty percentile levels. This indicates that college transfer English cannot possibly be the same course with similar goals in every part of the country." (XI, 24)

Average class sizes

The following average class sizes were reported by the eleven respondents: In the transfer freshman English sections, five averaged 25 students, but 27 or 30 were reported by three and two colleges

respectively. Of those offering terminal freshman English courses, three of the five limited these sections to 25 students. Remedial composition sections were even smaller, with most reporting average sizes of 20 to 25 students, and one even said 17. Other courses varied greatly in average size (from 15 to 50), with the larger averages cited for lecture courses (English literature, mythology) and smaller classes for writing courses. These averages follow the national pattern where 25-student composition sections predominate, with somewhat smaller remedial reading groups, but not remedial writing, where 25 students per section is most common. Here, too, the literature classes have larger numbers of students, 30 to 35 in almost half the schools reporting. (XI, 5)

Content of the freshman composition course

As we have seen, almost all junior college students are required to take a year of English. What are they taught in that year? Here the responses indicate a quite uniform practice throughout the state, a practice which in turn follows the national trend. The questionnaire listed eighteen possible areas of the composition course which might be covered in any given school, but it did not separate these into transfer and non-transfer courses.

All of the departments reporting teach these areas in freshman composition: paragraph development, rhetorical principles, research paper writing, and writing mechanics (spelling, usage, and punctuation). In addition, nine also teach the use of library references, logic and argumentation, and description. Half deal with vocabulary, and a few indicate that they cover language history and semantics. In the

sticky area of grammar, half list as part of the regular composition course the teaching of traditional and structural grammar. (One respondent even mentioned transformational grammar.) In other, miscellaneous areas, two or three schools report that they include the following in their freshman courses: narration, oral communication, listening, mass media analysis, and business writing. It seems clear also from catalogue descriptions and course outlines that imaginative literature is part of the freshman English course, either in conjunction with composition or as a separate quarter's work, which then includes the writing of critical studies. In summary, the composition course content seems very like the analogous university course. This is the general finding, too, of the national survey.

The amount of writing required is apparently fairly consistent within each school, for eight of the respondents report uniform theme-writing requirements within the department. Although the number required per quarter ranges from five to ten, the average seems to be seven or eight themes for each student per quarter. In total number of words, of the five who answered this question, three report a range of 2,000 to 2,500 words per quarter, with 4,000 and 5,000 for the other two. (This is apparently one area of teaching in which teachers may feel that they are not doing a sufficient amount, for one respondent, after answering that section, wrote, "Pretty low, no?")

When comparing these with the national medians of number of themes written, one finds similar requirements: 21 to 22 themes per year. (Data in the survey is given on a semester instead of a

quarter basis.) In number of words, however, the requirements in the Minnesota colleges are slightly below the national median. (XI, 34-35)

Some of the respondents sent student guide pamphlets or mimeographed information sheets which contain theme-writing instructions for students. These cover areas such as procedures for submitting late themes, definitions and penalties for plagiarism, form of themes, assigned word count, lists of serious errors, instructions for completing each assignment, and even sample themes, bibliography forms, and business letters.

Instructional materials

In the matter of textbooks, the questionnaire sought to determine the general types of books used in composition, literature, and remedial courses. Since the number of different titles available at this level seems almost infinite, textbooks were classed in genera, such as anthologies, essay readers, genre anthologies, programed texts, etc. The most popular kinds of texts in composition were essay readers, grammar handbooks, and rhetoric texts. Dictionaries and controlled research books were reported used by five departments each. Other types of textbooks (language study, workbooks, programed text, logic text) were each mentioned by one department as being used in the composition course. In literature, anthologies were mentioned by almost all of the respondents. Four or five departments also said they use poetry, short story, and drama anthologies for this kind of course. Those schools which offer remedial courses reported using in them essay readers, grammar handbooks, dictionaries, and programed texts. Overall the clear preferences

were for essay readers, grammar handbooks, and rhetoric texts in the composition courses, and literature anthologies in literature courses. The national survey notes these same types as being most popular, but, even with the aid of a computer to handle its many responses, could discern no pattern of use, for " . . . the variety of combinations staggered the imagination of the programer." (XI, 41)

The schools were also asked to indicate other types of instructional materials in use. A surprising number (ten) said that they use overhead projector transparencies, one mentioning specifically the S.R.A. composition sequence. At least eight use student course outlines or guides, which are generally mimeographed, but may be rather elegantly printed. (The contents of these will be discussed in a separate section.) In addition, three or four colleges variously use magazines, films, maps, booklists, and recordings. Similarly, the national survey shows the use of much staff-produced material, with between 75 and 85 percent reporting the use of course outlines and instructions for writing, book lists, spelling lists, correction symbols, grading standards, etc. -- the same areas covered by student guides as we have noted in Minnesota. (XI, 43-44)

Instructional methods

Four types of general classroom activity -- lecture, discussion, recitation, and laboratory -- were listed on the questionnaire, and respondents were asked to indicate approximately the percentages of class time spent in these various ways. Five of the colleges showed at least fifth percent of the time spent in

lecture, with the remainder distributed among discussion, recitation, and laboratory; and six indicated that most of the class time was spent in discussion-recitation and laboratory work, with a lesser proportion of the time (25 to 30 percent) devoted to lecture. There was no way of showing whether these ratios varied for different types of courses, although one college indicated that for terminal courses 30 percent of class time was devoted to laboratory (one assumes this to mean in-class writing and revising). More than half of the schools devote some class time (between 5 and 30 percent) to laboratory activity. It should be noted that all of the respondents use a combination of the lecture and discussion classroom activity, as is observed too in the national survey where 87 to 88 percent of the almost 300 colleges responding combine lecture and discussion in the regular composition course. (XI, 38)

In addition, various other kinds of teaching methods were mentioned as part of the class period. These include the use of programed learning in class, drill and blackboard work, presumably in remedial courses. One college mentioned team teaching in its freshman English course which is for B or better students. Almost all (nine) of the respondents said that individual student conferences were a regular part of the class time. This is in sharp contrast to the national practice as reported in the survey, where no mention is made of individual conferences during the class period, although this technique may perhaps be assumed to be included in the writing laboratory which is reported by a few schools. (XI, 38-39)

Syllabi

All but one of the English departments report that syllabi or course outlines are used, and more than half report both that the same ones are used by all instructors in a given course and that syllabi are individually developed and used. The implication may be that instructors teaching the same courses may work together to develop a course of study, but one cannot determine from this just how much latitude is used in adapting such a course of study to individual class situations. The national survey reports that more than three-quarters of the institutions polled do "have a syllabus for the regular freshman English course . . . Almost 52 percent of the teachers report that their syllabi were written by a faculty committee . . ." (XI, 39)

Six of the responding departments sent materials which may be termed syllabi or course outlines. These are worth close scrutiny since they give a quite detailed picture of the actual content, and often the methods of freshman English. Such materials may vary from mimeographed sheets to printed booklets which are part of the supply of books purchased by students. These syllabi may be intended either for students or for instructors.

The written statements meant for instructors clarify the philosophy of the course and its objectives. Through most of them run the similar themes of emphasis on communication as a two-way street, on awareness of self and of the world around, and on critical thinking, as a few quotations will show: One college writes, "Self-awareness, appreciation of social involvement and the changing environment, willingness to do and re-do until quality appears and

skill becomes habitual -- these are our goals . . . Perhaps the most important task of the English courses is to persuade the students that thinking clearly is an obligation of all citizens of our country and our world . . . We try to inspire our students to be critical, to be careful, to think clearly, to read with understanding and clarity . . ." Another institution sets up certain objectives: "To understand the role of language in human life; to understand the different uses of language; to learn to use language confidently and effectively; to learn to respond critically and intelligently to language." Yet another school states some goals: "To acquaint the student with the strengths and limits of language, of media, of genre, of style . . . to help the student learn discriminations between judgment and opinion, informed opinion and received opinion, validity and truth, fictions and reality . . ."

More commonly, statements about the courses are prepared for use by students and may include all types of relevant matters: course objectives (in the students' terms), list of required and supplementary textbooks, theme requirements, reading assignments, units of instruction, grading standards, general instructions about departmental policy, and model sample themes. Typical objectives, as these are written for students, are the following, which are selected from various schools and course levels: To become aware of levels of language usage. To understand the role of human interaction through communication. To learn to think clearly and to speak responsibly. To learn and to distinguish between reports, inferences, and judgments. To learn to enjoy reading and to develop a

set of literary standards. To learn to use the expository methods of exemplification, definition, and classification or analysis. To help students write short expository papers acceptably -- the kind of writing most students will do extensively in their college courses and in their careers. Teaching the student to formulate his own ideas and teaching the student how to express those ideas. To help the student formulate his own ideas, he shall be introduced to inductive and deductive thinking, analysis and classification, and research reading . . . In summary, the clear expression of ideas in correct and idiomatic English is the final objective of the freshman English sequence.

In the matter of theme assignments, a few of the colleges give very detailed and structured guides. For instance, themes may be limited in number of words, in number of paragraphs (often only one during the first quarter), in methods of development, in areas of subject matter, even in sequence of sentences. Reading assignments are laid out in both units of material and page numbers in the textbooks. Grading standards are spelled out by at least three of the schools. For instance, one institution cites minimum standards for a C paper: satisfactory development of subject, basic originality of all content and expression not credited to a source, acceptable diction, acceptable sentence structure, correct spelling, and satisfactory punctuation. In a few cases, too, plagiarism is defined, and the penalties for it are specified. Finally, some miscellaneous matters may be included in student syllabi, such as school or departmental policy on absences, late themes, conferences with

instructors, lists of correction symbols, manuscript form, revision or re-writing of themes, and, as noted above, sample themes.

The national survey gives no information about the content of syllabi or course outlines.

Follow-up

This section of the questionnaire was an attempt to determine whether any regular and formal "procedure for obtaining later independent evaluations of students' communications skills" existed. In most of the colleges, none does, partly because, of course, at least three are too new to have set up such techniques and collected results. But four schools reported that they do have means of assessing skills at a later time. One said that all sophomores take the Sequential Test of Educational Progress. Another has had standardized tests administered by the counseling department and also observes students in advanced classes in English. Of the later sources of information, transcripts of university work were cited most commonly. There is apparently insufficient information about the results of work done in English for instructors to make judgments on that basis about the effectiveness of the English curriculum. The response was mixed in answer to the question, "On the basis of this follow-up data, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your English curriculum?" (One department head's characteristic and forthright remark epitomizes both the spirit underlying this study and the comments of many other teachers: "English teachers are never satisfied!")

Some findings in the national survey should be given here since they show that teachers of English might feel encouraged if they could find out about the later progress and success of their students. Of the 187 department chairmen who reported about the later academic careers of their students, all but four said that their students did at least as well in a four-year institution as they had done in junior college, and many also felt that follow-up information of this kind helped them revise the curriculum. The national survey also reports that, unfortunately, there exist no follow-up studies for students who have completed the terminal course. (XI, 8-9)

General statements by respondents

The last part of the questionnaire solicited comments about any aspect of the curriculum or any problems of teaching in the junior college. Eight of the respondents submitted helpful statements from which it has been possible to abstract and categorize opinions reflecting some problems of teaching and, especially, of teaching in the junior college. These will be cited along with similar statements in the national survey.

Two of the institutions mentioned several perennial difficulties in teaching English: 1. Too much and too varied material presented in the course offerings (" . . . we try to cover too much . . . we are expected to spread our teaching talents thin because of the number and variety of courses we teach"); 2. Formidable amounts of paper work, both in grading themes and in executing administrative

requirements; 3. Lack of evidence of effectiveness (". . . the immediate results of teaching composition and literature are often difficult to measure . . ."); and 4. Problems of departmental consistency in grading standards of written work. In this connection, one college is experimenting with "grading seminars" this year. Each member of the department submitted sample themes graded A, C, and F, and these were discussed at one or a series of meetings held to ensure "common evaluative standards."

There were many more statements which reflected problems of teaching that are unique to the junior college. One respondent stated previous dissatisfaction with the organization of the composition course and with the ineffectiveness of a grammar review in freshman composition. Another mentioned "An extraordinary number of 'low' students this year . . ." at a time when the department ". . . experimented with dropping the remedial course . . ." with "disastrous" results. Two schools mentioned the difficulty of finding suitable texts: "Literature texts for terminal students are scarce," and "We have never been completely satisfied with any reader we have found. Most of them have selections that are only vaguely relevant to some topic the student might want to write about or study." Still another stated as the "biggest problem . . . English placement standards." And lastly, one respondent noted that "Our biggest problem is finding teachers who have some course background in composition, journalism, creative writing -- something relevant to freshman composition . . . they have no genuine interest in the problems of composition."

But there were also positive statements. Two department

chairmen, for instance, were proud of the freedom given their instructors to tailor courses and "to develop their own techniques within very general outlines." One noted especially the "freedom and individual creativity of our instructors. For our freshman English programs we have a general framework . . . but the individual instructor is free to operate in any way within the general framework." Three respondents mentioned general satisfaction with the freshman English program: "At the present we are more satisfied with the results in composition . . . due to the content and logical progression of the material." "Through the past several years we have worked out our freshman English program so that we are now generally satisfied with it." And, "We are rather proud of, but not entirely satisfied with our diversified program for the freshman student." But nevertheless plans for improvement are mentioned "in the light of the shifting student population . . .," perhaps in the direction of more tracking and remedial work.

Most of these comments, both the favorable and the unfavorable ones, can be related to those mentioned in the national survey as "Unique problems of teaching English in the two-year college." These problems were collated from the responses of the 239 responding junior colleges and were then separated into a dozen general categories. These categories in turn seem to relate clearly to particular characteristics of the junior college considered as an institution, which we saw in part II. For example, the national survey cites the needs for motivating "large numbers of students who lack interest and have unfavorable attitudes toward composition and literature," the "wide range of preparation, ability, interest,

needs, backgrounds, and goals within a single composition class . . ." and the necessity for remedial programs. All of these problems of teaching English may ultimately be related to the open-door policy of most junior colleges. Again, the survey cites 1. the need of recognizing that "the two-year college . . . is an institution for helping students on whatever level of ability or achievement they are," 2. the continuation of high school attitudes where "the development of a mature academic atmosphere becomes an impossibility," and 3. the "need for two-year college minded teachers." These problems may all be connected with the fact that the junior college is still seeking its own identity and trying to develop its own special flavor and personality. Other problems mentioned by the survey, such as minimization of English courses, "where the emphasis is on vocational, practical courses," or the need for two-way articulation with both the feeder high schools and the four-year colleges, -- these problems and others which the survey revealed are basically related to the comparative youth and the multiplicity of functions of the junior college as an institution.

V. CONCLUSIONS

What conclusions are possible from this apparently somewhat inconclusive data? Are there discernible patterns of curriculum and procedures in the variously situated, variously sized, and diversely populated junior colleges in the Minnesota state system? Perhaps surprisingly, the answer is yes.

That there is a uniformity in junior college English appears in many characteristics and practices noted in the previous section: percentages of declared transfer students, number of credits required for graduation, the offering of transfer freshman English and sophomore English literature (with non-transfer freshman English and with American literature offered by three-quarters of the schools), class sizes of between 25 and 30, the number of themes required in the freshman composition course, textbook types used, the combined lecture-discussion methods in the classroom, prevalence of individual student conferences during the class period, and the use of syllabi. In addition, the content of the freshman English course in all the responding departments included paragraph development, principles of rhetoric, research paper writing, and review of writing mechanics. Also, imaginative literature is taught in the freshman courses, either in a separate quarter or in conjunction with composition. In one other way there was a surprising degree of similarity among the colleges: a complete absence of innovation and experimentation with new approaches and new methods.

But that there are also differences in practice appears in certain other areas. For example, some colleges have data on the

academic abilities of their students, and others do not. Some group their students homogeneously, and others do not. Some have regular follow-up procedures (at least, for the transfer students), and others do not. Some offer remedial courses, and others do not. Nor does there seem to be any great concern about their type of course, for neither those institutions offering remedial courses nor those which do not have commented on the effectiveness of the course or the need for it (with the exception of the two who indicated that such courses may soon be instituted).

Inferences on the basis of such a small group may not be valid, but it should be observed that in a few areas of this study the outstate and the smaller colleges show similarities with each other and differences from the larger schools in population centers. For instance, the outstate colleges report the highest percentages of declared transfer students and the related higher medians in A.C.T. scores. Further, the smaller schools show a lack of homogeneous grouping, in contrast to the larger, city-situated colleges which report comparatively higher percentages of non-transfer students and homogeneous grouping. Because of smaller student populations, too, some schools are less able to offer variety in their curriculums.

As noted in the last section, under general statements by the respondents, the negative comments basically seem to reflect a concern with the identity and the functions of the junior college as an institution. One cannot know whether this concern is increasing with the increasing numbers of students, but certainly its presence

is quite prevalent. It is manifested not only in the comments of dissatisfaction, but also in the tentative plans to introduce and to strengthen remedial and non-transfer courses.

Finally, it should be inferred that English instructors have not the time to concern themselves with less immediate problems of curriculum and instruction. One of the department heads, for example, could not participate in the survey at all; he spoke of the lack of time and manpower to help with the task. Perhaps other non-respondents were similarly pressed. Another department chairman had to wait for a between-quarter break in order to find the time to answer the questionnaire, and all took many weeks to return their questionnaires. For all the respondents this additional work consumed some precious time needed for the primary job of teaching, time which is ill spared from the heavy work loads of the junior college teacher. In this connection, one might ponder (and possibly question) the statement by Samuel Weingarten that ". . . beset as these teachers are by innumerable instructional problems, many of them nevertheless retain an aloofness and a disdain for professional studies . . ." (I, 30)

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Implied throughout the findings and the summary of this paper are several needs which English departments might consider when they think about the curriculum best suited for the institutions and the students they serve. These recommendations are long-range goals and surely cannot be implemented, or perhaps even begun, under present conditions of work for understaffed departments. But part of being a professional teacher means being always open to new ideas and improvement in the way one works, being willing to take the extra time and make the extra effort in order to instruct better; it means also having the intellectual curiosity to think about and read about and talk about the values implicit in the work, especially as these pertain to the field and level with which one is associated. In this spirit, therefore, I hope that some of the following suggestions might be considered.

1. <u>The English curriculum should be re-evaluated in the light of the professed aims and goals as published in college catalogues</u>. Are we trying to do what we say we will do? Within our means, are we making every attempt to teach <u>all</u> of our students in ways suitable for all, at their levels of ability, with their limitations of background and goals in mind? If we are not honestly trying to do all we can for all our students, why not? Should our goals or our methods be changed? These are some of the questions we should be asking ourselves continuously, for today's situations are not those of yesterday, nor will tomorrow's be the same as today's.

2. <u>We should find and use reliable and uniform criteria of student abilities in language understanding and use.</u> We cannot do this job

alone, but we should always be looking for objective standards by which to judge our students' abilities. How can we know where to begin with instruction unless we know at what level our students are? This need is not, of course, unique to the junior colleges in Minnesota, but, as we may see from the recommendations in the national survey, is true in junior colleges elsewhere. Even in measurements which are currently used (A.C.T. scores, high school rank and grades, M.S.A.T. scores, etc.), we have seen that half of the schools responding to this survey either do not have or did not furnish any information.

3. We should assemble complete data about entering students. Perhaps we do not now have facts about our students -- their abilities, their goals. But surely, transcripts of high school work are available, tests may be administered and records kept, incoming interviews could be made part of a student's file. Is the lack of this data due to understaffing or the absence of effort?

4. We should also assemble follow-up data, at least for our students who go to a four-year college. That this is a need felt by some of our colleges is evident in the comments made in answer to the question about whether there was any regular follow-up procedure, comments such as, "Wish we did" and "results of teaching . . . are often difficult to measure." Records of future academic success are most surely necessary if we are to evaluate objectively our methods. Further, it should be possible to categorize some of the reasons why our junior college drop-outs leave school. If English,

for example, is a big hurdle which some students cannot surmount, obviously English departments ought to know this. Even a crude series of subjective statements by students dropping courses would be helpful. The need for follow-up data is recognized by Reynolds when he writes, "The value of this information is its usefulness in forming policy and developing curriculum . . ." He notes that follow-up of transfer students is fairly common, but quite uncommon for those who do not transfer to four-year colleges and writes that, "The rate of follow-up activity drops even more sharply for those students who either drop out during a semester or a quarter, or who withdraw from the junior college before graduation." (VI, 68) That the lack of this information is a national problem as well as one in this state should provide no excuse to delay gathering follow-up data.

5. We should seek ways to sponsor continuous, subsidized, and serious study of several areas:

A. Differences between transfer and non-transfer courses, especially freshman English. What is the content of each? Is the non-transfer course really different in kind or simply watered down? What are the grading standards for each? What, for instance, does a C in a transfer freshman course mean compared with a C in a non-transfer course?

B. Placement standards in various levels of courses. Assuming that we have moderately reliable criteria for judging students' capabilities, how should these be used? What, for example, should be the A.C.T. cutoff scores for placement in different course levels? We should bear in mind the almost complete absence of consistency

in standards in the nation, for the N.C.T.E. data on placement found ". . . that students placed in an honors section at one college would be in a regular section at a second college and in a remedial course at a third institution." (I, 60) This survey of Minnesota institutions shows no data on relative standards, but neither is there any basis for assuming uniformity of standards within the state.

C. Remedial (repair) courses. Here there seem to be only questions and no answers. Should the junior college include remediation as one of its functions? On what basis do we decide who needs remediation? Are all defects which need remediation really remediable? By what methods? To what levels of achievement? By what kinds of teachers? The national survey and writers in the field see this area as perhaps the most important in the whole field, as these quotations attest: "The responsibility of providing for students who come to us in the two-year college who have somehow failed to achieve a sufficient level of skill in reading and writing to do college work must be accepted as a fact of life by all teachers of English in the two-year college." (I, 100) And in the same vein, "Many students are graduated from high schools deficient in reading skills, in oral and written expression, and in basic mathematical skills. Noncredit remedial courses often enable students to overcome these weaknesses and thus successfully to complete college careers." (VI, 19) Finally, as James H. Nelson points out, ". . . some of the basic assumptions underlying remedial English programs in two-year colleges have not been fully validated.

One of these assumptions is that the English deficiencies common to junior college students are remediable and a second assumption is that special courses are required to remedy these deficiencies." (I, 58) That the problem will increase instead of disappear grows likelier as four-year colleges impose more restrictive admission standards and as a larger proportion of high school graduates enroll in higher education. Finally, we must look to ourselves and our attitudes toward this kind of course. Would most junior college instructors teach remedial courses voluntarily? If not, how can more positive attitudes toward remedial courses (and the students who need them) be instilled and cultivated? What can be done about better training and recruiting of teachers to do this work?

D. Writing. As on the secondary school level of the English curriculum, this is a perennial question in all of its facets, but in the junior college there are additional complications because of the vocational training function. We should be asking many questions: Why do we teach writing at all? Assuming different purposes in teaching writing (for use in college-level courses, in business, in journalism), should the methods and assignments differ? One instructor asks, "Could reading be substituted for writing? In some cases it may perhaps be more valuable to students to be able to read directions than to write reports." (I, 98) Should students with different abilities and goals learn different kinds of writing (narration vs. exposition, for example)? What are the relative advantages of in-class and out-of-class writing? Is frequency of writing a help toward facility? Is thorough revision

inhibiting to the student, or does it encourage precision in thought and correctness in mechanics? Are many short assignments better than a few long ones, or vice versa? What are the values of the research paper? Should all students write one? Is the controlled research reader an improved or merely an expedient tool? In short, all the same questions need to be asked and re-asked, even if one may think that we cannot arrive at complete answers.

6. We should work for released time for curriculum study. Since it became apparent that, even in a small undertaking such as this study, teachers of English in the junior college have no time away from their immediate duties to devote to professional improvement, the means should be sought to free some of them from part of their workload for study and communication with others. These instructors cannot be expected to worry about larger issues and instructional innovations when they are struggling merely to keep up with such increasing numbers of students as we have noted.

7. We should encourage all possible local and regional workshops, conferences, and meetings, and we should seek out all possible sponsors. Beginnings have been made by the Minnesota State Junior College Board, the Minnesota State Junior College Faculty Association, and the University of Minnesota. The enthusiasm generated by opportunities to communicate with colleagues and by the exchange of ideas makes these occasions worthy of some financial support by interested sponsoring groups. At the very least, some few teachers of English in the state junior colleges should be helped financially to attend regional and national conferences, such as the N.C.T.E. sponsors each year on English in the two-year college, or the C.C.C.C. meetings.

Some of these suggestions are beyond the powers of individual teachers, departments, even institutions. But some can be begun by one teacher working in one classroom. Perhaps this study will inspire such effort.

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North Hennepin State Junior College, Osseo, Minn., 1967-1968
Northland State Junior College, Thief River Falls, Minn., 1967-1968
Rochester State Junior College, Rochester, Minn., 1967-1968
Vermilion State Junior College, Ely, Minn., 1967-1968
Willmar State Junior College, Willmar, Minn., 1967-1968
Worthington State Junior College, Worthington, Minn., 1966-1968

IV. "Educator Says Colleges Lack Defined Aims," Minneapolis Tribune, Januury 15, 1968, p. 18.

V. Medsker, Leland H. The Junior College: Progress and Prospect. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960.

VI. Reynolds, James W. The Junior College. New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1965.

VII. Richards, James M. Jr. and Braskamp, Larry A. Who Goes Where to Junior College? A. C. T. Research Reports, July, 1967, No. 20. Iowa City: American College Testing Program.

VIII. Scannell, William J. "What Do Teachers Think About English in the Two-Year College?" Junior College Journal, Vol. 37, No. 1 (September, 1966), 24-29.

IX. U. S. Department of Commerce. Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1967. Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office.

X. Using A.C.T. on the Campus, 1965-66. Iowa City: American College Testing Program, 1965.

XI. Weingarten, Samuel and Kroeger, Frederick P. English in the Two-Year College. Report of a Joint Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English and the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF MINNESOTA STATE JUNIOR COLLEGES PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

Austin State Junior College
Austin, Minnesota

Brainerd State Junior College
Brainerd, Minnesota

Hibbing State Junior College
Hibbing, Minnesota

Lakewood State Junior College
White Bear Lake, Minnesota

Mesabi State Junior College
Virginia, Minnesota

Metropolitan State Junior College
Minneapolis, Minnesota

North Hennepin State Junior College
Osseo, Minnesota

Rainy River State Junior College
International Falls, Minnesota

Rochester State Junior College
Rochester, Minnesota

Vermilion State Junior College
Ely, Minnesota

Willmar State Junior College
Willmar, Minnesota

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

A SURVEY OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM IN THE MINNESOTA STATE JUNIOR COLLEGES

1. Name of institution: _____

2. Student Data

   A. Number of male students _____ Number of female students _____

   B. Number of students enrolled in: Terminal Program _____

      Transfer Program _____

   C. Using quarters or tenths (or any other fraction which you designate), please show the number of students grouped according to:

      1. High School Rank: (Example: Top tenth - 16 students, next tenth - 29, etc.)

      _____

      _____

      2. A.C.T. Composite Scores: (Example: 76-99 percentile - 27 students, 51-75 percentile - 46 students; etc.)

      _____

      _____

3. Required English

   A. Is English required for:

      1. Associate in Arts degree? _____ How many credits? _____

      2. Associate in Science degree? _____ How many credits? _____

      3. Associate in Applied Science degree? _____ How many credits? _____

      4. Certificate? _____ How many credits? _____

      5. Other categories? (Please specify.) _____ How many credits? _____

      6. Does one credit equal one class hour per week? _____

   B. May students be excused from required English? _____ Which courses? _____ On what basis? _____

      _____

4. English Courses Offered

A. Please list the titles of any English courses offered which are <u>not</u> shown in the current catalogue. (It is assumed that all courses listed in the catalogue are offered each year.)

_____

_____

_____

B. Remedial (Repair) Courses

1. If remedial reading is offered, is it optional? ___ Required? ___

If required, on what basis is assignment to the course made?

_____

Is credit given? ___ How much? ___ May it substitute for any required course? ___ Which?_____

2. If remedial writing is offered, is it optional? ___ Required? ___

If required, on what basis is assignment to the course made?

_____

Is credit given? ___ How much? ___ May it substitute for any required course? ___ Which? _____

3. Is it your judgment that remedial programs are effective for 100% ___ 75% ___ 50% ___ 25% or fewer ___ of the students enrolled in such classes?

5. Levels of Instruction

A. Are students grouped in classes heterogeneously? _____

B. If not, in how many levels are they grouped? _____

C. How many students are there in each level? _____

D. Which of the following criteria are used in sectioning students?

High school rank _____ Educational goals _____ A.C.T. scores _____

I. Q. _____ Vocational goals _____ Student's option _____

Sample theme _____ Teacher recommendation _____ Counselor recommendation _____ Other _____

6. Class Size - Please indicate the approximate average class size for:

A. Transfer Freshman English section _____

B. Terminal Freshman English section _____

C. Remedial Composition section _____

D. Remedial Reading section _____

E. Other Freshman English courses _____

_____

F. Sophomore Courses _____

_____

7. Composition Course Content

A. Please check any of the following areas that are taught in the freshman composition course. If these differ for various levels of instruction, please indicate for which levels they are applicable.

Paragraph development _____ Basic principles of rhetoric _____

Research paper writing _____ Use of library references _____

Vocabulary _____ Language history _____ Semantics _____

Grammar: Traditional _____ Structural _____ Transformational _____

Spelling, Usage, Punctuation _____ Logic and argumentation _____

Narration _____ Description _____ Oral communication _____

Listening _____ Mass media analysis _____ Journalism _____

Special vocational skills, e. g. business letter writing or report writing _____ Others _____

_____

B. Are there uniform theme-writing requirements in the department? _____

What is the range of number of themes required per quarter? _____

Average number of themes required per quarter? _____ Or, approximately what is the average total words per student required per quarter? _____

8. Teaching Materials

A. Please indicate the kinds of textbooks required in these types of courses.

	Composition	Literature	Remedial
Reader	_____	_____	_____
Literature Anthology	_____	_____	_____
Grammar Handbook	_____	_____	_____
Rhetoric Text	_____	_____	_____
Poetry Anthology	_____	_____	_____
Short Story Collection	_____	_____	_____
Drama Anthology	_____	_____	_____
Dictionary	_____	_____	_____
Language Study	_____	_____	_____
Workbooks	_____	_____	_____
Controlled Research	_____	_____	_____
Programed Text	_____	_____	_____
Miscellaneous	_____	_____	_____

B. Check which of the following are used:

Magazines ____ Films ____ Records ____ Maps ____ Course outlines ____ Students' guide to freshman English ____ Book lists ____

List of grading symbols ____ Overhead projector transparencies ____

Others _____

9. Teaching Techniques

A. Approximately what percentage of class time is spent in these ways?

Lecture ____ Discussion ____ Recitation ____ Laboratory ____

B. Which of the following techniques are a regular part of the class period?

Programed learning _____ Drill _____ Blackboard work _____ Team teaching _____ Individual student conferences _____ Television _____

Others (specify) _____

10. Course Outlines

A. Are syllabi or course outlines used? _____ Are the same ones used by all instructors in a given course? _____ Are syllabi individually developed and used? _____

B. If any course outlines are available, please enclose them when you return this questionnaire.

11. Follow-up

A. Do you have any regular procedure for obtaining later independent evaluations of students' communication skills? Please explain briefly.

_____

_____

B. Check one or several sources of later information.

Later college work _____ Employers _____ Community sources _____

Instructors in other fields _____ Other _____

C. On the basis of this data, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your English curriculum? _____

12. Please feel free to write on the attached sheet as much or as little as you like about your philosophy of teaching English in the junior college, about day-to-day problems of the classroom, your opinions of types of textbooks, your ideas for changes in the curriculum, your criticisms, or anything else related to the work. Suggestions for openers: "We're proudest of . . . ." "We'd like to change . . . . " "We think that English in the junior college ought to . . . ."